



NEWS



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CHP HELPS TEENS GET A JUMP START ON GOOD DRIVING HABITS

SACRAMENTO, Calif. –Learning the correct rules, laws, and proper driving etiquette are a few steps new drivers can take to help them get off to a good start to becoming responsible motorists. Through its “*Start Smart*” driving curriculum, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) is hoping to help teens develop into responsible drivers as they embark on their driving future.

“Many teens are eager to get their driver license when they turn 16 and may not realize the huge responsibility that comes with that privilege,” said CHP Commissioner Joe Farrow.

Every year, thousands of collisions occur in California involving teen drivers. According to the Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System, from 2007 through 2009, there were more than 31,000 fatal and injury crashes involving at least one teen driver between the ages of 15 and 19. Those same collisions resulted in 743 people killed and more than 48,000 injuries. However, it’s worth noting that over the course of those three years, fatal and injury collisions involving teens decreased by approximately 30 percent and 22 percent, respectively.

“Through continued education we can keep the momentum going in the right direction,” said Commissioner Farrow. “We invite new teen drivers, parents and guardians to attend a ‘*Start Smart*’ class in their community to better prepare them for the road.”

CHP personnel will conduct “*Start Smart*” presentations throughout the state at venues ranging from youth events to community activities. The target audience for the two-hour presentations is teens, 15 through 19 years old, and their parents or guardians.

“*Start Smart*” driving classes are designed to provide an interactive safe driving awareness class which will illustrate how poor choices behind the wheel of a car can affect the lives of numerous people. “*Start Smart*” also focuses on responsibilities of newly licensed drivers, their parents and guardians, and collision avoidance techniques.

Funding for the program is provided by a grant awarded by the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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